



Vasco de Lobeirar

Amadis of Gaul

Amadis of Gaul (Amadís de Gaula, in Spanish) was not the first, but certainly one of the best known knight-errantry tales of the 16th century. Not only is its authorship doubtful, but even the language in which it was first written - Portuguese or Spanish. It is imagined to have been composed in the 14th century, but the known first printed edition came to light in Zaragoza in 1508, and the oldest extant version is in Spanish.

The plot is the story of the brave knight Amadis, and starts with the forbidden love of his parents and his secret birth, followed by his abandonment near water. He is found and raised as the son of a knight. Upon reaching adulthood, he goes in a quest for his own identity, and investigates his origins through fantastic adventures: plenty of wizards, princesses, damsels in distress and other knights people the world of Amadis.

Amadis of Gaul, together with Palmerin of England and Tirante the White, are the only books saved from the fire by Quixote's curate, when purging the knight's library: Tirante, for its quaintness; Palmerin, because he thought it had been written by the king himself; and Amadis, for being the best of its kind. Even if Cervante's praise works more as censure, it's a fact that Amadis represents the style as no other, and was the father of a numerous flock, becoming a landmark work among the knight-errantry tales and marking the story of European literature. (Summary by Leni)

**Read by LibriVox volunteers. Total running time: 29:17:36**

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